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Biz Buzz

How valley will emerge

Timothy Roberts

Intel Corp. celebrated its 35th anniversary July 15 with the placement of a time capsule underground in front of its Santa Clara headquarters. It is to be opened on the company's 50th anniversary.

We took the opportunity to ask three of Intel's major players how they think Silicon Valley will emerge from its hole in the ground, the economic downturn that has eliminated close to 200,000 jobs.

Says Andy Grove, one of Intel's founders: "I think it is going to be different because it will concentrate on different things, but it will retain the qualities that its population endows it with. And it is populated with a large number of technically trained, technically oriented individuals."

Gordon Moore, Intel chairman emeritus: "It will be similar to what it once was. ... You've got the people here coming up with the ideas, and I think we will still be a very important player in an increasingly global industry."

Craig Barrett, CEO: "There is increased competition with other areas of the country, but Silicon Valley still retains a uniqueness about it. The heavy concentration of venture capital gives it a unique personality, and I think that will continue."

Pushing for BART

For the fifth time in less than a year, San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales and Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group President and CEO Carl Guardino have gone to Washington, D.C., to lobby for federal funds to extend BART from Fremont through San Jose to Santa Clara. From July 8 through 10.

Both men made the rounds pressing Congress for \$494 million in the next multiyear transportation bill to help pay for the 16-mile rail extension. At the very least, the local leaders want \$10 million for a preliminary engineering study.

The total cost of the BART extension is estimated at \$4 billion. Santa Clara County will pay half of that with a half-cent sales tax. Alameda County taxpayers are putting up \$546 million for their share of the line. The state has promised \$760 million.

The response, says Mr. Guardino, has been "overwhelmingly positive, especially because of the generous local share."

The mayor and Mr. Guardino met with a long list of members of Congress. They also met with Federal Transit Administration Administrator Jenna Dorn. The FTA, which oversees the environmental impact report on the project, has questioned the VTA's projected ridership figures.

Meanwhile, efforts to authorize spending for the next major transportation bill, which would contain the BART money, has stalled, according to U.S. Rep. Mike Honda's office.

Instead of the usual six-year reauthorization, it's likely to become a two-year bill. Mr. Honda, however, is still pressing ahead for a full-term \$375 billion bill.

Outreach and scrutiny

When Joan Ehrlich learned that Hispanic workers were facing widespread sexual harassment and job discrimination in Houston, she got the consulates of Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia and El Salvador together with the Houston mayor's office,

the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Department of Justice to form the Justice and Equality Program to educate workers and investigate employers. Ms. Ehrlich, the former district director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Houston office, later began a similar effort aimed at Asian workers.

Ms. Ehrlich has just been appointed to the San Francisco office, and she intends to bring the same combination of outreach and scrutiny here.

"The cure (for discrimination) is in the hands of employers, not in a federal agency filing 800 lawsuits a year," she says. "A lot of the cases that come to us are the result of bad management, not blatant racism."

She recommends that managers listen well to employees and make sure that contract workers and night workers aren't being mistreated.

Ms. Ehrlich is moving to San Francisco, but will spend time in San Jose visiting with her daughter, Stacey Hendler, a reporter for KGO-TV.

Save your receipts

Zanotto's Family Markets is closing its downtown San Jose store Aug.1, but it wants to thank its many (but not quite enough) customers. So, after Aug. 1, anyone with a receipt from the downtown store will get 10 percent off of groceries purchased at the Rose Garden store at 1970 Naglee Ave. Meanwhile, back at the store at 40 S. Second St., Zanotto's is trying to empty its pantry with 30 percent off on selected items. ... The Peruvian Chamber of Commerce of California is organizing a flag-raising ceremony in front of San Jose City Hall on July 25 to celebrate the 182nd anniversary of Peru's independence from Spain. The Peruvian chamber estimates that there are 50,000 Peruvian-Americans living in the Bay Area, most of them in San Jose. After the flag-raising, the celebration moves to the Inca Gardens Peruvian Restaurant, 87 E. San Fernando St., where there will be a fund-raiser for Pan De Vida, a breakfast program for poor children in Peru. ... New descriptive phrase for San Jose's southward-spreading growth, heard at a land-use workshop in San Benito County last weekend: Baja San Jose.

Got a tip? Contact TIMOTHY ROBERTS at (408) 299-1821 or troberts@bizjournals.com.

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